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# The Classical Weekly

Published weekly, on Monday, except in weeks in which there is a legal or School holiday, from October 1 to May 31, at  
Barnard College, New York City. Subscription price, \$2.00 per volume.  
Entered as second-class matter, November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of  
March 3, 1879.  
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on  
June 28, 1918.

VOL. XIX, No. 6

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1925

WHOLE No. 509

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# The Classical Weekly

VOL. XIX, No. 6

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1925

WHOLE NO. 509

## THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE ATLANTIC STATES SEVENTH ANNUAL FALL MEETING

The Seventh Annual Fall Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States will be held in Room 304, Barnard Hall, Columbia University, on Saturday, November 28, at 9:45 A. M. As always, the Fall Meeting of the Association will be held in conjunction with the Annual Convention of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland (the latter organization, as the major organization, determines the time and the place of meeting).

The programme will be as follows: The Faith of a Humanistic Philosopher, Dr. Margaret Y. Henry, Franklin K. Lane High School, Brooklyn, New York; The Present Trend in Vergilian Studies, Professor Catharine Saunders, Vassar College; The Greek Papyri as Historical Material, Professor William L. Westermann, Columbia University.

CHARLES KNAPP

## THE NEW YORK AQUEDUCT AGAIN WATER-WORKS ANCIENT AND MODERN THE ROMANS AS ENGINEERS

In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 19.1-3, under the title Aqueducts, Ancient and Modern: Rome, Los Angeles, and New York, I had something to say about the water supply of New York City. Since that article was written, I have learned that in the periodical called The Mentor 13.28-35 (September, 1925) there was an article entitled How Catskill Water Came to Gotham: A Story of the Greatest Aqueduct in the World, by Jerome W. Howe. There are fine illustrations, as follows: Kensico Dam in Course of Construction; Esopus Gorge, Looking Down Stream; The Longest Tunnel in the World (a view of the inside of the Shandaken Tunnel); View of Shokan and the Valley (one of nine villages demolished to make way for the Ashokan Reservoir); A Valley Turned into a Lake (this picture shows the same territory as was shown by the foregoing, but covered by the waters of the Reservoir); Siphon Pipes under Construction; The Water Takes an Airing—the Ashokan Aerator; The Great Ashokan Reservoir; A Part of the Great Dam (a closer view of the Ashokan Dam); Inspecting a Submarine Aqueduct (the picture shows a diver going down to examine the joints in the freshly laid aqueduct pipe that runs under New York Bay); Completing the Hudson River Tunnel, 1912; Laying Pipe Across the Narrows, New York Bay; The Southernmost End of the Aqueduct (the picture shows Catskill Mountain water among the

hills of Staten Island, in Silver Lake Reservoir, 160 miles from its source).

In The New York Herald, for Sunday, February 3, 1924, Section Two, page 12, there was an article entitled Tunnel to Double City Water Supply. This had to do with the Shandaken Extension of the Ashokan Reservoir.

In The New York Times, for October 18, 1925, there was an article entitled State Will Bury Towns to Put Hudson to Work.

The article described a project now under way, under control of the State of New York, to provide against floods in Northern New York, to increase water power, eliminate droughts, prevent the closing of mills, and improve navigation in Fulton, Hamilton, and Saratoga Counties. The project, to cost at least \$9,000,000, is to be financed by the proceeds of a bond issue. The bonds are to be "backed, not by the credit of the State, but by assessments on the land owners and the power companies that will benefit" by the project.

The reservoir, to be known as the Sacandaga Reservoir, will be supplied by the Hudson and Sacandaga Rivers. It will cover an area as large as Lake George. An earth dam, one hundred feet high, will be constructed below the confluence of the two rivers.

The dam will impound 38,800,000,000 cubic feet of water, creating a lake twenty-five miles long, with a maximum width of four miles, and a surface area of approximately forty-two square miles. Just above the dam the lake will be seventy feet deep; over the Vlaie, at the lower end, at present a marshy district, the lake will be forty feet deep.

The Reservoir will submerge sixty-eight miles of roadbed and seven miles of railway, cover many towns and farms, and clear away 11,000 acres of timber. The timber, however, is timber of relatively small value—ash, maple, elm.

The Reservoir will be widest over the swampy district now known as the Vlaie. When the Reservoir is completed, an unsanitary district will be wiped out, and the surrounding property will benefit greatly.

One thinks here of Maecenas's fine act, in buying the burying ground of the poor, visible from the Agger of Servius, and covering it with thirty feet of clean earth. See Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, 67 (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1889).

It will be noted that the Sacandaga Reservoir is a power reservoir, not a reservoir to supply potable water for a given area. The purpose is rather to regulate waters, to keep them from going to waste, or, far worse, doing damage through floods, and, finally, to put them to work in man's service. Light, heat, and power will be supplied to three counties. The

horsepower of the Adirondack Light and Power Company will be raised from 35,000 to 135,000.

Projects of a similar sort were undertaken on a large scale in Roman days. I cite here a passage from a fine book, *Rome and the Campagna, An Historical and Topographical Description of the Site, Buildings, and Neighbourhood of Ancient Rome*, by Robert Burn (London, George Bell and Sons, 1876). In the course of an admirable Introduction, on Romano-Greek Architecture (xxi-lxxxiii), Mr. Burn writes of tunnels (lv-lvi). I quote part of his remarks:

Of a similar kind, but for a different purpose, were the great cutting and tunnelling works undertaken for the regulation of the water of the smaller Italian lakes. The Veline lake, near Reate, on the banks of which Cicero's friend Axiu lived, was drained by M. Curius Dentatus in B. C. 290, by means of a deep cutting, through which the now celebrated cascade of Terni falls. The tunnel of the Alban lake, made in B. C. 395, is also still in activity, and draws off the superfluous water. This tunnel is cut through the grey peperino of the side of the lake, which lies in a crater-like hollow near the Alban hill, and is 7,500 feet in length, 5 feet wide, and 7 or 8 feet in height. . . . At the end where the water flows from the lake there is careful provision made, by the position of the walls, for resisting too sudden a flow of water, and also by a *piscina limaria* for the deposit of mud and refuse. At the other end, where the water issues from the tunnel, is a large reservoir, whence the water was distributed in different directions for irrigation. . . . <see pages 356-358>.

But perhaps the most difficult undertaking of the kind that Roman energy ever carried out was the tunnel of the Fucine lake, made by Claudius in order to reclaim the neighbouring district from the water. This is a far longer tunnel than the Alban, being nearly three English miles in length, nineteen feet high, and nine feet in width. It was cut through the hard limestone rock of Monte Salviano, which rises 1,000 feet above the level of the lake, and gave the water of the lake an outlet into the Liris.

Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, 60, declares that, as a means of purifying the water carried by the aqueduct known as the Anio Novus, the valley of the river Anio was dammed, not once, but three times, and three artificial lakes were thus formed in which the water was purified three times. On pages 61-62, Lanciani gives a very interesting account of difficulties connected with a tunnel whose purpose was to bring down to Bougie, Algeria, then called Saldæ or Civitas Salditana, the waters of a spring fourteen miles distant. The spring is now called Ain-Seur. Our knowledge of this tunnel is due to a report, engraved on a marble altar, which was discovered near Lambaese, in Africa, in 1866. The report

begins with a petition addressed in the year 152 A. D. by Varius Clemens, governor of Mauretania, to Valerius Etruscus, governor of Numidia. The petition reads as follows: "Varius Clemens greets Valerius Etruscus, and begs him in his own name and in the name of the township of Saldæ to dispatch at once the hydraulic engineer of the III legion, Nonius Datus, with orders that he finish the work, which he seems to have forgotten". The petition was favorably received by the governor and by the engineer, Nonius Datus, who, when he had fulfilled his mission, wrote to the magistrates of Saldæ the following report:—

"After leaving my quarters I met with the brigands

on the way, who robbed me even of my clothes, and wounded me severely. I succeeded, after the encounter, in reaching Saldæ, where I was met by the governor, who, after allowing me some rest, took me to the tunnel. There I found everybody sad and despondent; they had given up all hopes that the two opposite sections of the tunnel would meet, because each section had already been excavated beyond the middle of the mountain, and the junction had not yet been effected. As always happens in these cases, the fault was attributed to the engineer, as though he had not taken all precautions to insure the success of the work. What could I have done better? I began by surveying and taking the levels of the mountain; I marked most carefully the axis of the tunnel across the ridge; I drew plans and sections of the whole work, which plans I handed over to Petronius Celer, then governor of Mauretania; and, to take extra precaution, I summoned the contractor and his workmen, and began the excavation in their presence, with the help of two gangs of experienced veterans, namely a detachment of marine-infantry (*classicos milites*), and a detachment of Alpine troops (*gaesates*). What more could I have done? Well, during the four years I was absent at Lambaese, expecting every day to hear the good tidings of the arrival of the waters at Saldæ, the contractor and the assistant had committed blunder upon blunder; in each section of the tunnel they had diverged from the straight line, each towards his right, and, had I waited a little longer before coming, Saldæ would have possessed two tunnels instead of one". Nonius Datus, having discovered the mistake, caused the two diverging arms to be united by a transverse channel; the waters of Ain-Seur could finally cross the mountain; and their arrival at Saldæ was celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings, in the presence of the governor Varius Clemens and the engineer.

Ten years ago, while I was visiting friends in Virginia, I came upon a book, in their private library, of whose existence I had been unaware. Nor have I seen mention of it anywhere in print in the intervening years. The book, by Hilaire Belloc, was called *The Stane Street, A Monograph* (London, Constable and Company Ltd., 1913. Pp. x + 304). Pages 3-49 constitute an Introduction, on *The Roman Road in Britain*. The rest of the book is devoted to the Stane Street, the only name Mr. Belloc gives to a road (39)

. . . specially designed to unite London for military purposes alone, and by the shortest route, with the south-west and the Great Haven, the second entry into Britain from over sea, the alternative route to the Kentish one in the military connection from Rome through London to the frontier.

The road ran from the East Gate of Chichester to London Bridge, by the shortest road compatible with the overcoming of natural obstacles (50).

This is an extraordinarily attractive book, full of important matter relating to Roman roads, not only in England, but also in France. I commend it to all readers of these remarks.

I have space now to call attention, particularly, to just one passage (72-80)—a most interesting discussion of ways and means employed by Roman engineers to keep their great roads running, so far as the natural obstacles of the country allowed, in a straight line.

Finally, I may call attention here to a paper by an English scholar, Mr. R. C. Skyring Walters, "B. Sc., Assoc. M. Inst. C. E.", called *Greek and Roman Engineering Instruments* which was published in the *Trans-*



actions of the Newcomen Society, Volume 2 (1921-1922. 16 pages. 13 illustrations). The paper sought to give an account of

...the ancient field instruments, used by a fine race of engineers, for setting out such works as roads, canals, sewers, tunnels, harbours, reservoirs, and aqueducts....

Means of levelling and means of alignment are discussed. On page 15 there is an account of the Saldæ Tunnel, referred to above. The author notes that in the case of this tunnel the mistake was "not due necessarily to a faulty instrument, as a similar mistake was made in a London tube in the 20th century".

CHARLES KNAPP

## TWO WORKS ON SAPPHO

I. Sappho and Her Influence. By David M. Robinson. Boston: Marshall Jones Co. (1924). Pp. xii + 272; 24 plates. \$1.50.

II. The Songs of Sappho, Including the Recent Egyptian Discoveries, The Poems of Erinna, Greek Poems about Sappho, and Ovid's Epistle of Sappho to Phaon, Translated into Rimed Verse, by Marion Mills Miller, and Greek Texts Prepared and Annotated and Literally Translated into Prose (with Introductions and Commentary) by David M. Robinson. Lexington, Kentucky: The Maxwellton Co. (1925: Authors' Autographed Edition<sup>1</sup>). Pp. xiv + 436; 11 Plates. \$20.00.

### I

Professor Robinson's own book is a volume of the series entitled *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*. Its contents are as follows:

I. Some Appreciations, Ancient and Modern <3-13>; II. Sappho's Life, Lesbus, Her Love-Affairs, Her Personality and Pupils <14-33>; III. The Legendary Fringe. Sappho's Physical Appearance, The Phaon Story, The Vice Idea <34-45>; IV. The Writings of Sappho <46-100>; V. Sappho in Art <101-118>; VI. Sappho's Influence on Greek and Roman Literature <119-133>; VII. Sappho in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance <134-138>; VIII. Sappho in Italy in the 18th and 19th Centuries <139-147>; IX. Sappho in Latin Translations, in Spanish, and in German <148-159>; X. Sappho in French Literature <160-187>; XI. Sappho in English and American Literature <188-233>; XII. Sappho's Influence on Music <234-236>; XIII. Epilogue and Conclusion <237-247>; Notes <251-268>; Bibliography <269-272>.

With its many well-chosen, and well-interpreted illustrations, with its wealth of translation, paraphrase, or Sapphic reminiscence in other literatures, with the accompanying atmosphere of the author's competency to make an independent critical judgment on the difficult problems of the mutilated Greek, it is a welcome addition to the great corpus of Sapphic commentaries from which a convenient Selected Bibliography of Recent Books on Sappho is given in the Appendix (269-272).

It is to be regretted that the physical limitations of

<sup>1</sup>An edition, not approved by the authors, was issued by Frank Maurice, Inc. (New York, 1925).

this series did not permit the inclusion here also, as in *The Songs of Sappho*, of Dr. Robinson's prose translations of all the important 'new' fragments not given in Wharton's choice second edition (1887). Such a translation, as objectively accurate as possible, is absolutely necessary for the English reader, unable to control the Greek itself, in order to give him even a semi-independent idea of the 'new' matter which, added to the previously known, makes up the 'real' Sappho whom Dr. Robinson seeks to present. All lovers of Sappho will inevitably be making a fresh appraisal of the fragments to decide whether the added material reinforces the traditional verdict of antiquity. No mere *Ipse dixit*, even of competent Greek scholars, some of whom seem to cherish an anachronistic and almost puritanic conception of the great Lesbian, and certainly no belladonna injections by reckless expansionists, which distort Sappho's pupils and herself into banal contemporaries, should be allowed to deflect the judgment even of the general reader. The expert in Greek, reading and rereading with critical care the more or less mutilated fragments, will probably continue to endorse the verdict of the only wholly competent critics—her contemporaries and more immediate posterity who had her still extant writings reasonably complete—in regard to her artistry in rhythm and in the shimmering fabric of words with which she clothed her thoughts. This technical artistry, as is generally recognized, formed at least half the basis for the unstinted praise accorded her by a public to whom delight in lyric perfection was as the breath of life.

The appraisal of the *content* of her lyrics is another matter. Even with the new fragments before us, Sappho's range of thought appears to have been none of the widest, although Professor Robinson tells us (58), that "she touches almost every field of human experience. . .". As we know her poetry, the content is limited to very specialized interests. A passion for beauty is the connecting link between her artistry of words and her love of Nature, her passionate hate, jealousy and loves, and her love of Love. It need not surprise nor offend us that in all this she deals mainly with the empirical and sensuous rather than with the transcendental and spiritual. It would be difficult to extract ethical suggestion from more than a few of her fragments. If she visualized, for example, an after-life, as is suggested in connection with one of the new fragments, it would be most interesting to know—which we do not, in the present mutilated condition of the text—whether this indicated an advance over Homer and an anticipation of Pindar. She was not a Wordsworth. The pageantry of sea and sky and flowers did not call forth emotion "too deep for tears". Why should it? Like Alcman, she is an antidote against our overworked subjectivity. All this would go without saying were it not for the common tendency to smother favorite authors under non-existent attributes. Dr. Robinson is not wholly free from this tendency. On page 45 he speaks of her as "a woman who made it her life business to adorn and even to

glorify lawful wedlock. . .". Perhaps she did, but we do not know it. In composing her professional *epithalamia* it was as conventionally necessary for her to praise bride and bridegroom as it was, on occasion, for Pindar to eulogize Sicilian tyrants. It would have been as tactless for her to sneer at the marriage-bond as it was for the too optimistic wedding-guest in Lucian's 'Symposium' to wish the bride 'many happy returns of the ceremony'. Catullus, in spite of his *Epithalamium*, is rarely cited even as a flying-buttress of matrimony!

The exoteric purpose of the series—to give the facts about the influence upon subsequent times of Greek and Roman authors, or of certain phases of antiquity—is well cared for in Chapter I, and in Chapters V-VII, where Professor Robinson shows his very intimate acquaintance with the far-flung material, accumulated through the centuries, concerning Sappho in art and music, and in literature Greek, Roman, medieval, and modern, including echoes or translations in Latin, Italian, German, French, Spanish, and English. It is an imposing procession of celebrants. It is as long as his space would permit.

A more delicate problem is involved in the esoteric opportunity of the series—to confront the modern English reader, so far as is possible through brief citation and accurate translation, with a reincarnation of a given author and his actual contribution to literature and life. This problem is handled primarily in Chapter IV, but that chapter is, in fact, supplemented by the insertion in other chapters of translation, paraphrase, or free expansions. Under the despotic limitation of space Dr. Robinson can give only some of the more recently recovered fragments, together with samples from the old, including the two well-known longer lyrics. For the Hymn to Aphrodite, not yet displaced from its primacy among all extant Sapphic poetry, he gives four interesting versions, two of them hitherto unpublished and therefore new to the great majority of readers (47-52). He does not give the (1883) translation of J. A. Symonds, which is, we think, the best—both for the consistent transfer into English accentual verse of the 'Sapphic stanza' and for the accurate rendering of the real content and passion of the lyric (except, perhaps, of the first epithet). This version was omitted, possibly, because Symonds himself in his later revision (1893) blurred sadly the lines, almost wherever he retouched them, even changing "she" to "he" in the sixth stanza. Curiously enough Dr. Robinson, who knows and translates accurately, in his own prose version elsewhere, the accepted text, beclouds the situation by inverting the proposition and stating (50) that in the versions of W. E. Leonard and H. R. Fairclough "he" is changed to 'she'. . .". He adds: "The controversy as to the sex of the beloved turns on the admission or omission of a single letter in the Greek". This is somewhat misleading for the English reader. The Greek, it is true, *may be construed* after adding (by conjecture: see H. W. Smyth on verse 24, in his *Greek Melic Poets*, page 233) that single letter so as to inject a masculine subject for the stanza, but this addition dislocates the context to such

an extent that Symonds, in his changed version, avails himself of an adroit, but unfair, punctuation that gives in English the *squinting* impression that the last word, now become the object, may also agree with the subject! Gildersleeve, in his hitherto unpublished (and, probably, tentative) version, also adopts this masculating reading, but he, of course, carried the syntax through consistently. We dwell upon this controversy in detail because it involves what is vital to the interpretation of Sappho. The changed subject not only changes the psychology of this lyric, but obfuscates the whole attitude towards the alleged 'new' Sappho. The content of the 'new' fragments, it may be noted, reinforces the feminine subject.

If only versions subsequent to Wharton's unforgettable earlier editions were to be admitted—and they do make a very desirable supplement—we could wish for the further addition of Bliss Carman's terse and beautiful translation of this hymn. This is not written in the 'Sapphic stanza', but it has the supreme virtue of following the thought without distortion or expansion.

Dr. Robinson's own verse translations, several of which he includes, are part of his best contribution. He even ventures (56) to retranslate the ode on love-madness which has been conventionally admired by many readers who, though unable to appraise its real merits of verbal artistry in the Greek, could appreciate the skill and beauty of Catullus's Latin (Catullus 51), or find in the concrete charm of the picture in the first two stanzas of Sappho's ode an anodyne for the repellent pathological details in the remainder. The god Eros of the *Antigone* is, for us, as intelligible as he is invincible, but these biological data smack of a medical diagnosis. Yet Dr. Robinson, while freely paraphrasing the first and more manageable part, takes pains to catalogue in skilful verse the vital statistics of the sequel. Incidentally, it is worth noting, he wisely rejects from Edmonds's text<sup>2</sup> the overbold emendation which inserts a proper name, *Brocheo*, as prototype of Catullus's *Lesbia*. Sappho, it may be added, is not responsible for the whiff of "perfumed breath" that floats in after the text breaks off.

Dr. Robinson has a more inspiring task in translating (pages 72-73) the new fragment [Edmonds 86] which more than any other, perhaps, rises to the level of Sappho's acquired fame—sunlight, starlight, the moon "night with all her many ears", and the salt sea: there is no question that she dwelt with and loved them all. That Sappho, however, appreciated the beauty of the sea, when safe on land, hardly motivates the indignant exclamation, page 71, "But she was no 'landlubber', as Professor Allinson would have us believe". But landlubbers may love seascape ardently, and such evidence as we have (compare Edmonds 41) indicates that Sappho loathed voyaging on the stormy sea. It may be doubted whether she, like Alcaeus, felt the proper thrill at being 'borne in the black vessel through the sea-trough'.

<sup>2</sup>This and other references to Edmonds are to the text of Sappho published by J. M. Edmonds, in *Lyra Graeca* 1.180-307 (Loeb Classical Library, 1922. See *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 16.185-186).

Dr. Robinson's good translation of the fragmentary ode, *To the Nereids* (see Edmonds 36—twenty lines, badly mutilated at the left margin), is included in the chapter on Sappho's Life (19–20). It deserves especial mention and not least for the vigorous rendering of her outbursts of Billingsgate against her sub-morganatic sister-in-law:

Set to the ground thy low malodorous snout  
And let thy brother go his way....

But not even the exigencies of rhyme can obtain a poetic dog-license for "female", in "black-skinned female hound" (instead of 'she dog' or 'bitch'), any more than an English poet, unless patently facetious, can use 'perspiration' for 'sweat'. The female, surely, is more deadly than the male!

Dr. Robinson claims elsewhere (*Songs of Sappho*, 84) that "the finest lines in all Sappho's poetry... are those descriptive of Anactoria...." (Edmonds 38). This fragment of 20 (+ 2) lines, is, in large part, fairly well preserved. The content is the loyal love of woman for woman and is, if the ending, unfortunately conjectural, be right, a brave assertion that it is "better to have loved and lost", etc. The Greek is in the familiar 'Sapphic stanza', and the workmanship is certainly worthy of Sappho, but we would be slow to admit that this is her finest lyric. Nor does Professor Robinson, in his translation (81–82), really take the pains that such sweeping praise would call for. He elects to render in rhymed anapaestic dimeters and begins well but is "lured... astray", as he admits in advance. In nearly half of the lyric we are perplexed by verses of varying lengths and different meters.

For the fragment [Edmonds 85], which a recent reviewer, disagreeing with the verdict just cited, calls "without question the most beautiful of the additions made to the Sapphic anthology", we are given the very enticing "Adaptation" by M. M. Miller (83–84). But, unfortunately, it is necessarily a guesswork expansion of a tantalizingly mutilated text which can hardly justify either the enthusiastic praise of the reviewer or even the reminiscence of *Intimations of Immortality*, tentatively suggested by Dr. Robinson (83). The 'dewy meadow' (of the Greek text), however, does seem to carry some visualization of a dreamy, Lotus-eating Elysium.

On page 66 we have, in the dignified prose translation by Edmonds, what Dr. Robinson calls the "aubade", from which his running-mate, in the larger volume, manages to decant a volatile fluid-extract, one part Browning, nineteen parts banality. This fragment, when translated literally, does give us a vivid "glimpse... of Sappho's ménage", earthy though it be, and we come closer to the 'real' Sappho without the sudden feeling of revulsion against her which is superinduced by Dr. Miller's realistic Sappho and her hypothetical "grisettes".

The minor fragments of Sappho, when not incrustated with modern barnacles, shine like jewels. A number of these are scattered through the book. The two-line fragment [Edmonds 164], *The Bride to Her Virginity*,

is given, on page 91, in Edmonds's rendering, which reflects the frank delicacy of Sappho's exact thought, as well as her skilful use of anaphora to which we owe the preservation of the fragment. In passing, it may be remarked that this translation, although not verbally literal, might well serve as a model for verse-translating. The expansion into four lines by M. M. Miller (*Songs of Sappho*, 179) changes into vociferousness one of the most exquisitely compacted thoughts in all Sappho. Dr. Robinson, however, when he deals with this fragment again (*Songs of Sappho*, 189), refers to the second line of Edmonds's version as "poorly" translated.

We cannot treat in detail the copious Sapphic material which Professor Robinson gives from other literatures, medieval and modern. We can only express our thanks to him, both for reminders of forgotten parallels or reminiscences and for many suggestions new to us, like the reference to Tennyson's Elaine (page 205).

With Sappho in Art Dr. Robinson is especially fitted to deal and he compacts much into the pages allowed for this discussion (101–118). This is supplemented by the legends attached to the 24 plates which are placed at our disposal.

We might wish, for the sake of the general reader, that Phaon could have been reduced to the least common denominator. This remark may seem ungracious inasmuch as nearly all that the author has to say about Phaon and the adjacent haze of myths is very interesting to the specialist (37–43). But it deflects the attention of the public from Sappho. Thus a good reviewer, in *The New York Times*, July 19, 1925, inserts a large and totally intrusive illustration of Sappho leaping from Leucas! This *post mortem* and improbable story about the Leucadian diving-board and Sappho's unsuccessful attempt to elope with her reluctant chauffeur, Phaon, along with other anachronistic love-affairs needs less emphasis than the author's laudable purpose of concentrating the attention of the docile reader upon the 'real' Sappho.

In addition to the Phaon story, Chapters II and III deal with personal *realia* and "The Vice Idea". To the lover of great literature such matter is of secondary importance. To the devotee of biographic cross-word puzzles, however, these data bulk large. Dr. Robinson has the praiseworthy enthusiasm of a loyal lover. He cannot, to be sure, turn brunette into blonde nor add, beyond peradventure, one cubit to Sappho's stature, but he has a continual woe upon him to white-wash the lily, to rouge the rose, and to cast a puritanic perfume on the violet. His diagnosis marches with that of Wilamowitz and other distinguished scholars. He reiterates it in season and out. This seems to force him occasionally into an illogical position. Surely it is not necessary to set up two extremes and to contend (45) that Sappho was either "the child of sodden vice", a *ρῆιδας*,—none of us believes that!—, or else that she was wholly free, according to modern, and therefore anachronistic, canons, from all 'moral' blemishes. She may have been simply *un-moral*. Nor is it even true (44) that "Immortality <sic> and loss

<sup>1</sup>See foot-note to *Songs of Sappho*, page 249.



of self-control never subject themselves to perfect literary and artistic taste". Unfortunately, examples to the contrary abound. It is a good argument, as far as it goes, that the head of a girls' school, even in antiquity, would have to mind her Ps and Qs—though alphabets differ. It is true, also (43)—"And God be thanked for it!"—that Sappho's poetry, however passionate or frank, is not, as we know it, erotic in the malodorous modern sense. And we may well remember, also, that the absence of many modern inhibitions brought at least the advantage of avoiding a "seared conscience". A bird of the air is merely *un-moral* and does not sear his conscience if he steals the breakfast of a caged canary. Nor was Sappho a "blue-stocking", as Byron called her. She wore no stockings at all and handled without gloves the live wires of love and hate. She was quite insouciant of any 'blue laws'.

When all is said, however, there does remain a possible antithesis. Burning Aeolic passion seems, at its best, more akin to selfishness than to the high Homeric ideal of wedded love. The women of Homer are not out of drawing with our own sense of perspective, but we are not likely to classify Sappho with Nausicaa, Arete, or Andromache.

Most teachers of Greek, we surmise, prefer to let sleeping dogs lie and to compare Sappho and her coterie of girl companions with Socrates and his devoted band of followers, though this parallel is far from complete. Attica was not Lesbos, but we seek refuge under Holderlin's

Shady plane-trees of the story  
Where through flowers the Ilissus flowed,  
Where the young men dreamed of glory,  
And to Socrates their hearts they bowed,

and let it go at that! The protesting feather-duster can stir up, but sometimes merely redistributes, the dust of ages.

The detailed discussion of these few points leaves untouched a great deal that calls for notice in this devoted and scholarly study of Sappho. In the review of the larger book (see below) there is discussed the confusing double use of the term 'Sapphic stanza'—now in its strict technical sense, and now again, without warning, applied to any free and easy sequence of stresses, with or without anacrusis, which any poet is at liberty to employ, provided he does not call a tooth-pick a spade.

Finally, we agree with our author that even so great a poet as Matthew Arnold was not justified in giving to his verses, on the jilted but still receptive and optimistic girl, the title *A Modern Sappho*. We only wish that Dr. Robinson had gone further and had directed his eager, crusading spirit against the arbitrary and reckless use of the term 'Sapphic' as applied to modern verse-makers and verse, however meritorious they may be in other respects. Expansions, padded with modern sentiment, are not Sapphic.

## II

The sumptuous volume by Dr. Miller and Professor Robinson contains so much that may be helpful to the sincere interpreter of literature, combined with so much that is openly arbitrary or contradictory, that it

is difficult to summarize it fairly. This is, in great part, due to the composite authorship. Professor Robinson has the scholar's purpose to represent the 'real' Sappho as she emerges, a mutilated torso, from the fragments; Dr. Miller frankly uses these same fragments as a nucleus, or suggestion, for expanding in facile rhymed verse such twentieth century context as he chooses to imagine. Dr. Miller has the advantage of his collaborator in one respect. Having no thesis to establish about Sappho as a superwoman, he can, perhaps, visualize more unconcernedly such scraps in the way of vital statistics as may be extracted from the fragments and can use them ruthlessly, for his own purposes, unhampered by any "academic" inhibition.

Dr. Miller writes the Preface (1-21). In this, for the benefit of readers virgin, as he assumes, to literary form, he expounds the difference between English accentual verse and the quantitative verse of Greek poetry. More to the purpose he gives, under an excellent figure, a very vivid and helpful description of the mechanism of the 'Sapphic stanza' as being comparable to two pairs of Greek soldiers, marching with trochaic tramp, and a Greek dancing girl, the dactyl, between them. In the closing Adonic the dancing girl leads, with one soldier at heel. After giving this picturesque account of the Greek rhythm, however, he serves notice that he knows a more excellent way, and, accordingly, introduces his own sequence of stresses at will. He explains (6) that *his* verse "very well harmonizes with the graceful, flowerlike sentiment of the original"! No one worth listening to seriously demands now-a-days, we suppose, from a verse translator of Greek poets any specific *tour de force*. Anyone is free to stake out his own claim, subject only to the reader's sense of rhythm or superior knowledge. But to begin, for example, the closing Adonic of the Sapphic stanza with an iambic cadence (as is so often done by lazy exploiters of this rhythm) changes materially even in English, as it would in Greek, the verse psychology. Assuming that it is a desideratum at all—otherwise, why meddle?—to transfer a feeling for antiquity, it is difficult to understand the perverseness of modern poets, whether major or minor, who seem to think that here, too, merely a larger output of ephemeral modernity is called for. If Swinburne and Symonds are "exotic" and "academic" in their accuracy, they have, at least, naturalized in English verse this beautiful rhythm which has made, in spite of necessary weathering, its successful and long flight, via Horace, to its modern hangar.

Apart from form—which can be reproduced reasonably well (if the translator so elects) by a poet humble enough to take pains—there is the very distinct question of content of thought. This question arises on practically every page for which Dr. Miller is responsible and presents itself with three grades of intensity.

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Percy Mackaye, for example, in his *Sappho and Phaon*, makes beautiful and unforgettable use of his own adoption of a near-Sapphic rhythm in describing a sunrise on the Aegean:

Soon then the sullen, brazen-horned oxen  
Rise in the east, and slowly with their wind-ploughs  
Break in the acres of the broad Aegean  
Furrows of fire.



First, he gives fair notice that he has reconstructed 78 mosaics from 175 fragments. How small a part the original plays can be seen by reference to Dr. Robinson's actual translations. At this *tour de force* one might not need to cavil provided Dr. Miller kept within safe limits. One reconstructed Epithalamium does, in fact, build up a suggestive picture, although, in the process, one of the most exquisite fragments (see below) is sadly marred. A purely pragmatic test, in each case, might seem to be, Was it worth while? Compare, for example, the exquisite synthetic gem that Symonds (Greek Poets, 1.335), keeping closely to the Greek, produces by combining two fragments taken respectively from two poets—Simonides and Bacchylides.

Second, in what is professedly *translation*, Dr. Miller injects padding, for the sake of rhyme, or meter, or what not, beyond the reasonable quota allowed by the immigration laws. Thus in the Hymn to Aphrodite (in which he has some attractive turns), he translates lines 1 and 2 as follows:

Throned in splendor, beauteous maid of mighty  
Zeus, wile-weaving, immortal Aphrodite . . .

The words "beauteous" and "mighty" are wholly intrusive and delay and dislocate the swift and compact original.

Third—and in this no scholar, who feels himself in any sense a trustee of Greek literature, can be expected to acquiesce—he builds up on the most exiguous suggestions contexts wholly conjectural and sometimes unwarranted in their very nature. This hypothetical context is, in turn, cited elsewhere as demonstrated fact. Thus from the elephantine joke about the big feet of the janitor (*not* the "Groomsman": see page 182; Edwards 154), he obtains a roving commission to insert various cheap *facetiae*, like the "country hike" in the "Tramping Party" (see below), or punishes us with a "hail"-storm of puns (see pages 293-294), etc. The filling out of lacunae, and of the thought involved, should only be entrusted—and then tentatively—to the skill of experts. For such exploiting of the Lesbian Dr. Miller has, unfortunately, ample precedent. If his poems, largely original in content with the exception of a few translations, had been clearly designated as free expansions or adaptations, they might be allowed to align themselves—provided the reading public would consent to this improbable juxtaposition—with such masterly expansions and resetting, for example, as Swinburne's Sapphics or his Anactoria. Swinburne, however, in spite of transcendental and ethical additions, gathers up the real Sappho as unerringly as quicksilver seeks out and collects grains of gold.

It must, in justice, be emphasized, however, that in this book the cards are on the table. In each case these expansions of the fragments are followed by the corresponding Greek text—in so far as there is any correspondence—carefully edited and translated into English prose by Dr. Robinson. If, therefore, any reader of these poems, some of which have no little charm of their own, allows himself to think that he is

reading Sappho, he does so at his own risk and in spite of honest warning.

The most amazing feature of the book—and doubtless this is pure selfdeception, not disingenuousness—is the citing of sentiments or characteristics as if they were Sapphic, which have, in fact, been pulled in out of the air. But, we must also add in fairness, even here the reader has an Ariadne thread of safety. Cross-references to the alleged data are given. These, however, usually lead us into a *cul de sac*. Dr. Miller's own imaginings are cited as if they were part of the established text. Even Dr. Robinson, strange to say, is occasionally carried away on the Icarian wings of his coadjutor. Thus, on page 60, in his Critical Memoir he would prove the assumption that "Sappho was a beautiful woman of athletic build" by a cross-reference to page 245, line 4. This turns out to be Dr. Miller's expansion,

there's no need to make stronger

The muscles, you Amazon, that you are thewed with, instead of the actual text, page 247, line 3, which Dr. Robinson must content himself with translating by "from thy bed release thy beloved strength". Sappho may have been as 'strong' as a young steer even if the traditional 'little and black' be correct! On page 257, also, he praises Dr. Miller's "free paraphrase in which he vividly recreates the scenes, even to the badinage in which Atthis, whose pertness is indicated in Fragment 188, (page 247), would naturally have indulged when decorating Sappho". This cross-reference, to be sure, is to the Greek text and to his own prose translation, in which, however, there is no trace of "pertness" or "badinage" unless it be "truly . . . I shall not love thee". In reality he must have in mind his colleague's adjacent expansion on page 245:

It's time to get up! So once on an outing  
Pert <sic> Atthis to wake me was gleefully shouting.  
"Crawl out of your bunk <sic> or I'll love you no longer. . . ."

Dr. Miller, in his Preface (17-18), rests placidly on this bunk and refers to "the <his own!> delightful vein of thoroughly modern railery revealed in 'Aubade' (see page 245)" as explanatory of the scraps of American *facetiae* that he serves up, from time to time, along with the remnants from the Sapphic banquet.

The most extreme sample of this expansion is the next number, The Tramping Party (page 249), where 14 mutilated lines of text, of one or more words each, are inflated into a skit of 20 lines. The whole "country hike" is evolved from one word, 'wayfarer', and the elaborate costuming (or lack of it) is made out of the whole cloth, except for the one expression 'the dresses'. We might well hesitate to step off of firm text, in order *deposare* like Socrates on airy fancies, were we not sustained in our high 'hiking' by this footnote: "Cf. the trip to the country by the Bohemians and their grissettes in Henri Murger's 'La Vie de Bohème'".

Not a few of Dr. Miller's more enticing expansions (e. g. on pages 280, 288, 290, 352) will be, or have already been, admired by readers indifferent to injected anachronisms or expressions quite impossible to imagine on Sappho's lips.

Although the modern Who's Who in Antiquity has long since sharply differentiated between the most familiar Greek and Roman proper names (except Ajax), it will, we fear, not trouble the unhellenic public that Dr. Miller uses, at will, for the sake of rhyme or meter, Dian, Jove, Mars, Venus, or Vulcan; nor, by the same token, that (page 245) "*nota bene*" effects an anachronistic rhyme with "Mytilene". And the public, perhaps, may not rebel at the unmercifully strained quantities: "Pandion", for example, on page 125, has a short penult, and, on page 133, poor Niobe is bereaved of her last syllable in addition to the loss of her last child! But *all* readers, we hope, will be offended by the modern, sententious and inconceivably intrusive line (page 121), "Prudery is Passion's pandar". This amazing line masquerades as the closing words of verse-dialogue, interchanged—according to a favorite tradition—between the two great Lesbians. The noble directness of the two fragments, as preserved, is obliterated.

In the case of readers who do not stop to check up these modern confections by means of Professor Robinson's prose translations, and who cannot check them up by the Greek, what, we may ask, will be their idea of Sappho's poetry? Dr. Miller may rest satisfied that he will have destroyed for them the "academic" tradition! As to Sappho herself Dr. Miller is so relentlessly confidential that it is doubtful if all of Professor Robinson's loyalty can succeed in keeping Sappho on her pedestal. The latter, in fact, in his praiseworthy efforts to be loyal at once to truth and to his own lofty conception of the poet agrees, in his Critical Memoir (page 73), that in early life she was a "sybarite" and later, when life ran on the lees, more or less of a skinflint. These body-blows are almost as damaging as anything that the comic poets or the iconoclastic Christians allowed themselves to imagine, not excluding her ineffectual stooping to conquer Phaon.

The very important section of the book, occupying sixty-one pages (25-85), for which Professor Robinson alone is responsible deserves more detailed review than can be accorded to it here. These pages are devoted to two elaborate and interesting Introductions. In the Recovery and Restoration of the Relics of Sappho (25-47), the author has in mind, as is natural, both the instruction of the general reader and the demands of the specialist. Nearly half the space is devoted, along with other more discursive remarks, to a discussion of the text of J. M. Edmonds (in *Lyra Graeca* 1.180-307, in Loeb Classical Library: see *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 16.185-186) which, with proper individual editing, he makes his own. His attitude towards Edmonds's admirable contribution to our knowledge of Sappho is, on the whole, sufficiently appreciative, but, at times, verges on the meticulous or unconvincing. His wholly subjective deliverance on what is 'poetic' he attempts to reinforce by a cross-reference to page 257, where he quotes Edmonds's rendition of fragment 83—a surprisingly charming one for such an uninspiring theme. The great surprise, however, is that this is supposed to heighten our admiration for Dr. Miller's expansive effusion on The Jilt.

To the complaint, on page 43, that Edmonds forces into his text "unpoetic" and "irrelevant" matter, the reader will, perhaps, be less hospitable in view of our author's leniency towards his colleague who injects so many hypodermics, not, to be sure, into the text itself, but into the minds of the ultimate consumer. And when Professor Robinson closes this particular monograph with the assertion that these "new" fragments will at last refute the "age-long aspersions on Sappho's character" and prove to us that her "relations with her girl companions were 'lovely—holy things indeed'", we have a somewhat inopportune recollection that this word, *ἀγάρα*, in the passage cited, is supplied only by conjecture (see Fragment 197, page 275) and is, moreover, not necessarily typical of our Tenth Muse in the rôle of a "sybarite"! The same word on the lips of Alcaeus (see page 122), which, indeed, we should like to consider significant, is part of a different story!

The second Introduction, The Real Sappho, A Critical Memoir (49-85) is a monograph containing much interesting and valuable discussion of known or inferred data for the personality of Sappho and her environment, or for the fantastic stories about her that grew up even in Greek antiquity and were handed down, by detractors and uncritical admirers alike, through Latin literature to modern times. Some of this has been more fully treated in chapters of the author's other book on Sappho. To some details, especially his earnest defence of the purity of Sappho's character, allusion has been already made above. His allusion, incidentally (on page 79), to the "crushes" in School and College is distinctly unfortunate. Their baleful possibilities are known and dreaded. A more convincing statement of the broader question of the comparative ethical value of lyric poetry (upon which we naturally lay more stress than upon the vital statistics of a writer which have long since passed into an impenetrable penumbra of uncertainty) might have been deduced from a critical examination of Plato's argument from which, in connection with music, Professor Robinson makes a brief citation on page 75.

It is even more surprising that he fails to avail himself of one other buttress for his argument. On pages 77-78 he leads up to Wilamowitz's estimate of the Lesbian, but omits allusion to the not inferior authority of Herbert Weir Smyth, who defends (Greek Melic Poets, 227-229), Sappho's character to the furthest limit that sound reason and his highly specialized knowledge permit.

There are a useful Selected Bibliography, Supplementary to Wharton's (401-404), a Concordance of Greek Texts of Sappho (405-409)—this is very essential for cross-reference for the fragments as numbered by Robinson, Wharton, and Edmonds, and also lists the new Oxyrhynchus Papyri, an index of Ancient Sources of Text and Commentary (411-413), and a General Index (414-435).

In closing, we may express the hope that the 'real' Sappho may be saved to the reader by Professor Robinson's text and prose translations.

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